Eyes Full of Stars by beeupsidedown (bookofreid)

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There was something about being under the stars that made Billy Hargrove fall in love for the first time.

1. The Beginning

The music was faint, barely a hum to be heard to the ear. It wasn't particularly good music. It was more along the lines of cheesy romance songs that were often sold on cassettes, waiting to be ordered from the number off the television set. But it was music nonetheless against an otherwise uneventful and quiet night in Hawkins, Indiana.

It was enough to draw Billie's attention. He'd been tossing and turning all night, unable to sleep in the heat that tormented them that summer. He considered his options for a moment- either lay in bed in his own sweat or step outside and attempt to find the source of the music in what he could only imagine would be a considerably cooler temperature than his house was at the moment. The latter choice was the obvious way to go and so he slipped on some sandals, opting to forget about socks and leather boots for the night.

Billy had lived in Hawkins for months now but he'd never truly bothered to explore it. Now he wished he would have tried a little more as he stumbled through the trees that cut off his backyard, unsure of where he'd end up. The cool breeze was his only comfort as it caressed his skin softly as if to assure him he would be alright. He followed the trickle of music until he stumbled into someone else's backyard.

His presence wasn't immediately noticed and so he took a moment to observe the scene. There was cheap patio furniture out, nothing more than a small table and a few chairs made of wicker. One was occupied by a familiar face. A girl who he'd come to have great conversation with and actually considered a friend.

"Y/N," he called out, grabbing her attention. She nearly fell out of her chair at the sound, a small laugh escaping her lips as she realized it was only him.

"Hargrove. Trying to give me a heart attack?" she asked with a small grin. "What are you doing here?"

"Heard the music," he explained briefly as he pointed at a small

portable radio that sat on the table.

“Ah, Yeah. Sorry if that woke you. I tend to listen to it when I can’t sleep,” she motioned for him to take a seat across from her.

“Yeah, I can’t sleep either.”

He took a moment to look at her. Her face was clear of makeup, either washed off before bed or melted off from the heat of the day earlier. The slight sheen of sweat made her face a little shinier than normal but in the moonlight, Billy couldn’t help but think she looked quite radiant.

“Heat’s a bitch, huh?” she laughed as Billy chuckled and nodded. “The cold is amazing. You’re freezing so you just throw on layers, sleep in blankets. But this heat? I could be naked and still want to take my skin off. It’s awful.”

Billy nodded in agreement. The mention of being naked caused him to give her a once over. She wore a loose t-shirt and a pair of shorts that were cut dangerously short. The sight of her skin caused a typical male reaction down in his loins that he wouldn’t have expected.

Y/N was a friend. A real friend who he enjoyed talking to instead of trying to sleep with. It wasn’t that she wasn’t pretty, because she was stunning in Billy’s mind, but something about her had always made him feel as if it simply wasn’t right to try and make a move on her. He’d followed his instincts and instead had been rewarded with someone whose company he enjoyed.

“I didn’t know you lived this close to me,” Billy admitted as he looked around. Her house was simple enough from where he sat, probably an exact replica of his own inside.

“You’re too busy driving around town to ever think about my house,” she replied with a small shrug. “But you’re welcome back whenever you want. I’m usually out here at this time.”

“This late?” Billy asked slightly alarmed. It must’ve been two in the morning now.

“Yeah. My house heats up like the devil’s ass cheeks. I fall asleep out here half the time.”

Billy grinned wildly, partly at her choice of words and partly at imagining her falling asleep on such an uncomfortable chair. He could already picture her in the mornings when the sun woke her, running inside to shower and get ready for school.

The two sat in a comfortable silence for a while as they listened to the music that flowed through the air. Y/N was a bit surprised that she’d ended up spending the night seated next to Billy Hargrove, but it was a welcome change. Sitting outside, while nice, was also often lonely. Before long she had twisted herself into her usual sleeping position on the chair with her legs dangling over the side of it.

“So, tell me, what’s up with you?” she asked with genuine interest. Billy shrugged, unsure of what to say.

“Not much. The usual. Working on my car, working out,” he replied with a flex of his arms. Y/N rolled her eyes as his biceps bulged through his cut t-shirt.

“You’re boring,” she replied with a smirk. He scoffed. He was the least boring person in Hawkins.

“You’re the one who’s boring,” he grumbled, unable to think of a better comeback. She laughed heartily and nodded.

“Oh, I’m absolutely boring. I thought you knew that by now.” She tied her hair up into a ponytail and sighed, content to have her hair away from her face.

“Nah, you’re probably the best person in this town. Everyone else is so…”

“Boring?”

“Yeah, boring.”

He was being honest. Of all the people in Hawkins she was the one person who he felt the most connected to. He hadn’t felt real friendship like the ones he’d had in California, and people like

Tommy were merely replacements, people meant to fill in the gaps. He didn't actually feel any attachment to them. But Y/N was interesting, and so he'd kept her around.

"Yeah well, they're a little less boring when you're beating them up, right?" she asked as she referred back to the fight Billy had been in just two days before. He was frightening when angry, and a part of her really wondered where his violent tendencies came from. Despite everyone's advice and genuine concern, she'd remained friends with him.

"You gonna lecture me again?"

"You know I don't like violence."

"But you like me. So it works out."

Their eyes met and it was as if a small exchange of understanding passed between them. She sighed and slumped into her seat, her eyes fixated on the stars above. Billy followed her gaze and found himself taking a moment to appreciate the beauty of living in such a small town. The stars were mesmerizing at night.

"You're lucky you're the most interesting thing about this place, Hargrove."

"You know you can call me by my name, right?"

"Okay, *William*," she grinned devilishly and thoroughly enjoyed the glare he shot her way.

"On second thought, you can just call me Hargrove."

Billy watched with a curious smile as her eyes fought to stay open. They'd probably killed another hour out in the open with their conversation and he could feel his own exhaustion begin to set in.

"I should head home," he stood and the chair creaked at the sudden weight change. "I'll see you at school?"

"Hmm, if I wake up in time," she replied with a small yawn. Suddenly it made sense why he'd always seen her run into class late.

She always overslept out in her backyard.

“Want me to swing by and pick you up?” he offered.

“In your death trap?” she asked as she eyed him, a small playful smirk on her face. She knew how much he loved his car, he’d talked about it often enough, and so she knew he’d resent her comment. He simply smirked knowing full well of the reputation he’d garnered from his love for speed.

“It’s the death trap or being late to Mrs. Hamwell’s class. *Again*.”

She frowned at the emphasis he put on the word. Their english teacher was strict on punctuality and she’d already accumulated enough detentions from her. Which coincidentally was where she and Billy had their best chats.

“I’ll be fine,” she replied with a shake of her head. “The sun will wake me.”

“Alright,” he didn’t bother to argue anymore, “I’ll see you then.”

“See ya, Hargrove.”

He made his way back to his house and opened the door as softly as he could. The last thing he wanted to do was wake up his father in the middle of the night. He already knew what would come if he disturbed his sleep.

“You’re barely getting home?” a soft voice asked, startling him.

“I just went for a walk, Max,” he replied. “What about you? What are you doing up?”

“I came to get a glass of water,” she lifted the cup in her hands to show him, the glass already sweating condensation from the number of ice cubes in it. “It’s too hot to sleep.”

“Yeah, well you gotta try. Now go before Neil wakes up.”

She nodded and hurried off to her room at the thought of having to face her step-father. The heat irritated everyone and it wouldn’t be a

good night to cause problems. Billy sighed as he felt sweat begin to trickle down his neck once again. He couldn't help but envy the fact Y/N was sleeping out in the cool breeze.

2. On My Mind

The first school bell rang when it always did that morning, signaling that it was time for students to get to class. Billy waltzed right in, shooting winks at the girls who sat up front and leaving them blushing and flustered at his attention.

He took his usual seat at the back and waited for Y/N to enter. She'd rejected his ride and he was curious to see if she'd actually make it on time that morning. The second bell rung, warning students who were still in the hallways that they only had a minute left to get to class. Just seconds later she rushed in, her hair a little crazed in its bun that had obviously been a second thought that morning. She squeezed by the students who were already at their desks and took her seat next to Billy with a huff.

"Should've taken my ride," Billy smirked as she tried to catch her breath. She had run the last bit of the way to the school having, kicked it into high gear when she'd heard the bell go off from a distance. Her cheeks were flushed and there was a small trickle of sweat that ran down her neck.

"I made it, didn't I?" she grinned as her hands worked to undo the messy bun on her head. He watched as her unruly hair came cascading down. She shook it out as her hands tried to maintain it without much success. To anyone else, she looked like a mess that had only just rolled out of bed. To Billy, she looked hotter than ever.

"What?" she asked as she noticed his lingering stare. His eyes had clouded with lust for a brief second, something he quickly pushed away from his mind as he cleared his throat and looked away.

"You look like shit," he replied with a wicked grin on his face. She lightly punched his side at the insult and the mere touch caused an unfamiliar feeling to spread in his stomach. He figured it was what people meant when they claimed to have butterflies in their stomach and cringed at the realization that he was actually beginning to like this girl in a very different manner than he was accustomed to.

"Need a ride home later?" he offered in an effort to distract himself

from the fact he was becoming a teenage girl. She shook her head as she pulled her notebook and pencils out of her bag.

“Steve’s giving me a ride home.”

“Harrington?” Billy asked in disgust. Y/N rolled her eyes at his attitude. It was common knowledge that the two weren’t on the best terms.

“Yes, Harrington. We’ve been friends for years and he gives me rides every now and then,” she briefly explained. “What? Did you happen to think you were my only friend?”

Billy ignored her comment despite the irritation it brought.

“Steve lives on the opposite side of town.”

“So?”

“I’m just saying it would make more sense to come with me,” Billy shrugged, attempting to mask his growing jealousy. “We live close to each other. But hey, if you enjoy wasting his gas then be my guest.”

“Hargrove, why are you making such a big deal out of this?” she questioned. Her eyebrows furrowed as she tried to understand his intentions. It had to be his ego making him act out. He didn’t like to lose to Steve in any form even if it was just a car ride.

“I’m not.”

He spent the rest of the class doing his best to remain nonchalant. It usually came easily to him, but the thought of Y/N and Steve made him annoyed, even if they were just friends. He knew they were close, he’d seen it the moment he stepped into Hawkins. Everyone had their cliques in the small town and she had belonged to Steve’s. Billy had felt triumphant when he’d managed to steal Tommy and Carol away but he hadn’t succeeded in stealing Y/N or at least not completely. While she agreed to a friendship with him, he could tell her true loyalty laid with Harrington.

Originally it hadn’t bothered him much. Y/N was an interesting person, but in no way was she considered popular. She was someone

who went with the flow and often disappeared into the background if you weren't looking for her. While he enjoyed her friendship, she wasn't about to be the next prom queen like other girls who had made Billy's acquaintance. But maybe it was seeing Y/N underneath the stars the night before that had caused him to look at her in a new light. He hated how cliche it sounded. He didn't want to live in a chick flick, and he definitely wasn't the type of guy who would swoon over a girl. It was usually quite the opposite.

Still, he did his best to lean back into his seat with an effortlessness that did, in fact, require a great deal of effort on his part. Y/N simply leaned back as she always did and doodled away in her notebook.

Unbeknownst to him, Y/N's mind was also occupied with thoughts of him. She couldn't help but steal glances at him when she was sure his attention was elsewhere, her eyes fixating on the necklace around his neck. He'd pick it up and place it on the edge of his lips, playing with it ever so often while their teacher droned on about Shakespeare.

Billy Hargrove was difficult, and she always did love difficult men. It was one of her faults, undoubtedly stemming from the need to feel needed, and therefore always trying to fix whoever seemed a little broken. But Billy was something she'd never encountered before and so she'd kept as much distance as she could romantically, not once attempting to pursue him. What they had was nice, a casual friendship where they were both allowed to be as rude or obnoxious as they wanted without the other becoming judgmental. However, when it came down to it she couldn't deny the attraction she felt towards him. She convinced herself that it was just an attraction, and nothing else.

The sound of the bell was almost a relief to Billy. He watched her out of the corner of his eye as she stood and gathered her belongings, shaking the hair out of her face. He nodded towards her when she uttered a quick goodbye his way and bounced out the door. He followed behind at a much slower pace and by the time he reached the hallway, she had already vanished into another classroom.

"Byers," Billy called out as he entered his next class. He could already feel the stares of other students burning into his back as he sat next to Jonathan.

“Billy?” Jonathan asked in confusion. They were barely on a first name basis and had only ever talked when they were both a little too early to pick up their younger siblings from the Wheeler house.

“You know Y/N, right?” Billy began.

“Yeah, since middle school. Why?”

“What does she like?”

“Like?” Jonathan was confused as to why he was asking him if all people. Sure, the two of them were friends but they weren’t very close. If he wanted to know the serious details then he should’ve been asking Nancy or Steve, although he could see why he wouldn’t go that route.

“Never mind, Byers,” Billy sighed as he could tell he hadn’t picked the most appropriate person for his questioning. He stood and heading towards his seat in the back, hiding his disappointment with every step.

“Dancing,” Jonathan called out after him. “She likes dancing.”

“Nance, please tell me those two aren’t gossiping about me,” Y/N whispered as she tore her gym shirt off. She was drenched in sweat after having been forced to run laps inside the school’s gym despite the fact it was practically scorching inside. Nancy glanced over at two other girls who whispered to each other and shot glances towards Y/N every other second.

“Yup,” Nancy replied with an eye roll, “they are. You know girls suck.”

“Except you.”

“Except me,” Nancy chuckled as she helped wipe away the sweat on her back before Y/N proceeded to do the same for her.. “They’re part of the Billy Hargrove fan club so that’s probably what they’re talking about.”

“You’re joking.”

“No. I wish I was. I’ve heard girls talk about your friendship with him, which I disapprove of by the way,” she added with a pointed look.

“Oh, Nance. Would you even love me if I didn’t make bad decisions every now and then?” Y/N smirked as she pulled her regular t-shirt on. “And besides, he’s not all that bad.”

“You’re wrong,” Nancy argued although she knew it was pointless.

“He’s just…complicated. We all are. Just because he didn’t fight demogorgons doesn’t mean he doesn’t have his own demons he deals with.”

Nancy frowned at the comparison. She’d heard rumors about Billy’s father and Max Mayfield had shared a few brief anecdotes that only proved the rumors right. Still, she didn’t think violence was something that was ever okay unless used in self-defense.

“Well then I think you’ll have to get used to girls gossiping about you,” she replied. “You know how awful they were with me when I dated Steve.”

“Ugh, don’t remind me. I’d never wanted to punch someone so badly and you know I’m not a violent person,” Y/N replied at the memory. She was always protective of Nancy and having to hear the awful things spread about her had caused her great anger. Thankfully enough, Steve was quick to dispel the rumors, something she wasn’t so sure Billy himself would do if he were in a similar situation.

“You’re a good friend,” Nancy smiled, “Crap taste in men, but good. I’m glad Billy Hargrove hasn’t changed you.”

“Please, as if someone like Hargrove would be enough to change me, an *angel*,” Y/N joked. Nancy laughed, the sound pure as she shook her head.

“You’re ridiculous.”

“Do I waste your gas by having you drive me home?”

Steve was taken aback by the sudden question. One moment he and Y/N were joking like usual, and the next the question has slipped right off her tongue.

“What? Why would you even ask that?” he was confused, unsure of why she would even think that anything having to do with her would be a waste on his part.

“Hargrove offered me a ride home and I turned him down. He said I was wasting your gas since you live on the other side of town.”

Y/N could almost hear the huge eye-roll Steve gave at the mention of Billy. Of course he would say something like that. He was only ever negative when it came to him.

“Well, he’s wrong. You never waste my gas. You’re one of my closest friends and I like talking to you on the way home. You know that.” Steve replied as he gave a reassuring look. “And besides, Billy wishes he could get you in his car.”

“Yeah, I don’t think I’d ever get into that deathtrap,” she chuckled. “But this is the second ride he’s offered me this week.”

“What’s up with that? You two becoming a thing or something?” Steve asked with a frown. His hands tightened around the steering wheel as he spoke, “because you know he’s not good for you.”

“You sound like Nancy.”

“I’m just saying. I don’t know why you’re even friends with him after everything he’s done.”

“Definitely sound like Nance. Have you two been talking about me?”

“That’s beside the point,” Steve replied, exasperated at the fact his advice was going through one ear and out the other. “Just be careful. He’s not like the other guys you’ve dated.”

“Well, I’m not looking to date. I’m off guys right now,” Y/N replied with a shrug. Steve let out a small disbelieving laugh at her statement.

“Yeah, right.”

“I am!”

“Y/N, how many times have you ended up at my house after a heartbreak?”

“Shut up,” she grumbled, knowing all too well that he had a point now. “But I’m serious. Billy and I are friends. And I know you hate that but you have to just be okay with it.”

“Just…promise me you’ll be safe, okay? There’s a scary side to Billy that I’m sure he never shows you. And I don’t want to see you get hurt, emotionally or physically.”

“I can handle myself, Steve,” Y/N replied with a small smile. “You know I can.”